



---

**File Code:** 1950; 2800; 1560  
**Date:** September 17, 2020

Dear Interested Party:

This project announcement letter serves to initiate scoping, “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed” (40 CFR 1501.7). I request your input on the following proposed action regarding the Owl Creek Gravel Pit Project.

### **Proposed Action**

The Forest Service proposes to establish a gravel pit of approximately 35 acres in T2S, R22W, Section 36, Garland County, Arkansas. Timber impacted by operations would be sold using the most appropriate method of disposal. Access would be provided using existing National Forest System (NFS) road (see enclosed map with approximate locations).

### **Purpose of the Action**

Overall guidance for the proposed project is found in the 2005 Revised Land and Resource Management Plan (Revised Forest Plan) for the Ouachita National Forest. The purpose of this action is to have access to have a source for aggregate material in the local area to be used on Forest, County, and state roads and available to the public for personal use.

### **Need for the Action**

There is not a source of aggregate material within a reasonable distance to be used for road maintenance in this area of the Caddo-Womble Ranger District.

### **Invitation to Participate in Project Planning**

Scoping is not limited to a single point in time; we will continue to accept and consider comments until an implementation decision is made. With that said, your comments will be most helpful if they are received early in the process. They will help us identify environmental issues associated with implementation, and alternative ways to meet Forest plan objectives and desired conditions. Your involvement will enable us to better assess concerns of the public.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will become a part of the public record for this proposed action. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, anonymous comments will not provide the Agency with the ability to provide the respondent with subsequent environmental documents.

### **Objection Process**

This project is subject to subparts A and B of *36 CFR Part 218 Project-Level Predecisional Administrative Review Process* (objection process); it is not authorized under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA).

The designated opportunity for public comment in response to this solicitation is **September 21, 2020 to October 21, 2020**. Providing specific written comments during this time will afford you

standing to later file an objection to the project, should you desire (see Upcoming Project Planning Steps).

Pursuant to §218.2, specific written comments should be within the scope of the proposed action, have a direct relationship to the proposed action, and must include supporting reasons for the responsible official to consider.

### **How to Comment**

Specific written comments must be submitted to: Ichiro Stewart, Acting District Ranger, 1523 Hwy 270 E, Mt. Ida AR 71957 or fax to 870-867-3338. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Send electronic comments, in a common digital format, to [comments-southern-ouachita-caddo-womble@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-southern-ouachita-caddo-womble@fs.fed.us). Please state "Owl Creek Gravel Pit Project" in the subject line when providing electronic comments, or on the envelope when replying by mail.

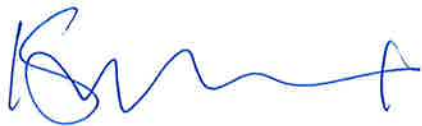
### **Upcoming Project Planning Steps**

As stated above, your comments will help us identify issues and they will be used to formulate alternatives to this proposal. An environmental analysis will be conducted and the results will be documented in an environmental assessment (EA).

Upon completion, the EA will be released for public review and comment. A 30-day notice and comment period pursuant to 36 CFR 218 will be initiated. This comment period will afford you another opportunity to obtain standing to later file an objection to the project, should you desire.

An objection period, if required, will follow the regulation found in §218.7. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted specific written comments regarding the project and attributed to the objector, unless the issue is based on new information that arose after a designated opportunity to comment (§218.8(c)). If you have questions about this project or would like more information, please contact Andrew McCormick at 501-321-5285 or [andrewtmccormick@fs.fed.us](mailto:andrewtmccormick@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ichiro Stewart', with a stylized, flowing script.

ICHIRO B. STEWART  
Acting District Ranger

Enclosure

